

The Director: 'Times have changed'

After having five directors in as many years and surviving a four-year battering that turned into a national debate about what kind of intelligence service Americans want, the CIA is beginning to get its act together again, insists the Director of Central Intelligence. Others are not so sure.

Stansfield Turner thinks the agonizing public debate over the CIA is over. "I think we've turned the corner. And we're on the offensive, not the defensive. We've got an important mission for the country. We're doing it well. We're doing it legally. We don't have to take any more guff."

But to many, Turner personifies a CIA hamstrung with restrictions, a cold depersonalized operation with its own captain but with all orders coming from the White House and Congress. What some would prefer is a skipper who would take the ship down to lie quietly on the bottom while the depth charges exploded above them.

Opinion on Turner varies. A former National Security Council staffer says: "He's intelligent, a good field commander, but he leaves a lot of distressed people in his wake. The main charge I've heard is that he suppresses dissenting views. This makes the material less reliable to the wider intelligence community. And there's the feeling that he'll do whatever the president wants."

Ray S. Cline, director of Soviet studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says Turner is moving in the right direction in analysis of intelligence. "The criticisms you get all have to do with the other role of the CIA, the clandestine operations. The impression is that Turner isn't interested

in the operations side and that he hasn't been able to counter the deterioration of the last five years and get the clandestine services working again."

"Covert operations," Cline says, "the intervening in political events abroad, are virtually dead, except perhaps for feeding a little propaganda to foreign newspapers to counter Soviet manipulation of the news."

"But I'm not sure anyone could do much better, considering the hamstringing of the agency," he adds. "A new bill containing 250 pages of restrictions and monitoring provisions demonstrates a punitive attitude in the administration and Congress to the CIA. I don't think we can live with that. You have to take some risks. There are a lot of crises coming in the next few years. Turner would say that his intelligence is still very good because of the technical intelligence. But that mostly relates to large countries. It gives no information about the intentions of people. You need human intelligence for that. You can't take satellite pictures of intentions."

Turner disagrees. "Only the newspapers — and Ray Cline — say I rely too much on technical intelligence. Ray's a fine fellow. I like him. He's out of date. He hasn't understood what I was trying to do. But I've fought for the clandestine service. And they're stronger and better than they were a year ago. I have no intention of downgrading them. I'm here to make this a strong clandestine service for 1988 as well as 1978. I'm not playing for just the short run."

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Turner denies the agency is being hamstrung. "Having to report to eight committees of Congress on covert action is confining but the rest of these restrictions people are talking about are all involved in the protection of the rights of American citizens and this really is not a major part of our activities. These restrictions, which we all want, are not that hamstringing."

Complaints from the Old Boy net, largely centering on the clandestine operations issue, remain nettlesome to the director.

"I've been a staunch supporter of the clandestine service and have gone to bat for them. Like that speech at the National Press Club. What am I doing there? I'm defending the clandestine service's right not to reveal its sources. I don't do that to promote morale but because that's what's necessary to have an effective clandestine operation. And if they continue to believe they're effective their morale will be good. But it is up, much up."

Reductions in the clandestine service "gave the younger, clandestine people more opportunity, and that's percolated down. As a result of this we've cleaned out . . . not dead wood, but excess wood. They were good wood, but excess. They had too

many of them. So there are more promotions in the clandestine service this year than ever before."

Regarding 'risk-taking' in the clandestine service the Admiral says flatly: "the clandestine service is out of business if it doesn't take risks. Most of the Old boy network is subconsciously upset because covert action is more difficult today. But I've been here 19 months and there's only one covert action I would like to have undertaken that we didn't. In short, there are not many covert action opportunities today that would be useful and effective for our country."

"The times have changed since we could overthrow a government in Guatemala or Iran. The country neither wants to do that kind of thing nor is it really as *do-able* as it was 30 years ago."

"The Old Boys are upset because the *elan*, the fun of going out and not only finding intelligence but influencing events is over. It was more vibrant here in the past. It was more vibrant in the military in the past! Every time there was a smoke signal we sent the fleet off over the horizon. We don't do that any more. And they're just beginning to learn that here."

"It's interesting because so many experiences here are just five or 10 years behind my military experiences. The attack on this agency came about 1974. The attack on the military came in 1970. The *elan* of charging off into the wild blue yonder in the military has changed too. But they'll get used to the changes. Because what's left to be done is more important than it was in the past. . . intelligence as opposed to covert action."

"I don't feel circumscribed in taking the appropriate risks. I think we're being more judicious in evaluating those risks. Now maybe the Old Boys also sense that. But I tell you, when you look at the mistakes that have been made here in the past because people didn't ask 'Is it worth it?' Some of the things for which they were most criticized weren't worth doing. They didn't measure the risk against the benefit. Now we're doing that. And if they think that means we aren't willing to take risks they're full of baloney!"

"I sat at that table recently with all CIA professionals around the table and I said 'I want to do this, now vote!' Every one of them voted no. I said 'OK gentlemen, you win. I just want the record to show that I — the only outsider — am the guy voting to take the risk.'"

"Now I don't say they were wrong, and I was right. If I really thought I was right I'd have over-ruled them. But I'm perfectly willing to take risks, that's what I'm paid for. And the whole organization knows that. If I let you talk to the clandestine people they would not produce many instances where they suggested a risk that I wouldn't take. I've turned some down, of course."

Turner refrains from comment on what even President Carter considers a serious-intelligence failure in Iran. "His argument is how can we prove we had good intelligence without showing it to you," CIA spokesman Herb Hetu says. And on another current anxiety, the question of whether or not a "mole," a double agent, has worked himself into the top ranks of the CIA, Hetu says: "It would be foolish for the director to be absolutely categorical in denying that a 'mole' exists, but in his best judgment he believes there is not."

A top Pentagon official sees CIA directors as "reflecting what administrations want at any given time. There have been more 'outsider' directors than 'insiders', so Turner isn't unique. Four star admirals like to run the ship from the bridge. The idea of a strong command line never leaves them. He likes everything to fit into that tight little line . . . *bing, bing, bing*. Also he's a systems analyst who likes to condense everything to a neat statistical matrix. Turner's uneasy with words, which means he has tendencies opposed to those intelligence agents who want to caveat everything."

Retired Admiral Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt recommended Turner for several important Navy posts in the past. But he sees the CIA as "increasingly acting as a propaganda arm of the presidency rather than absolutely ruthless about coming out with objective criteria." This tilting towards presidents began with Henry Kissinger, Zumwalt says, and today

"Carter makes public statements and the next CIA analyses lean in that direction."

CIA morale in the field is so low, he insists, "that if you evaluate on a one-to-10 scale in comparison with the KGB, the CIA would have gotten a five at its highest effectiveness. Right now they operate at the level of one. The KGB operates at eight."

Zumwalt blames Carter rather than Turner. "I don't think anyone at the CIA could perform differently given a president who operates from the naive base Mr. Carter operates from, who thinks that the same ideological and theological orientation effective at Camp David with two religious men can be applied to the Soviets. So they're taking him right and left. And Admiral Turner is giving the president exactly what he wants, which is what one should expect from a loyal presidential appointee."

Turner flatly denies that he has politicized the agency's intelligence reports for the benefit of the administration: "What you are seeing is a greater openness regardless of whether it supports or detracts (from administration positions). I'm not in the policy game. I'm declassifying what can be de-classified. Sometimes I'm praised and sometimes I'm damned. I'm not here to undercut the

president but I'm not here to support him in a political sense, because I have to be objective."

He also denies the accusation that he restricts dissenting views in CIA analyses. "If there is one thing I have done successfully it is to emphasize minority views in the intelligence reports. You can't find anybody that would deny that I've driven footnotes out because before I came here I never read the footnotes. I assumed they came from some wild guy who had to dissent."

"Today if a dissent is necessary it goes right in the text of the estimate. You have to read it. Then the decision maker's got the whole picture. I am just excited what it's done to improve the estimating process and I'm curious to know who accused me of suppressing minority views. If I knew I'd probably hang him up by his thumbs . . ."

He is not embarrassed by the Arkady Shevchenko case in which it was revealed that the former Soviet diplomat had spent large sums of CIA-provided money on a woman. "I don't want to be a prude. I don't approve in my own life of the kind of things Shevchenko was doing. But it's his private life. He's an unmarried man. He has the right to do what he likes with his money and his spare time. We're trying to help him transition into being an American, without invading his constitutional and legal rights to privacy."

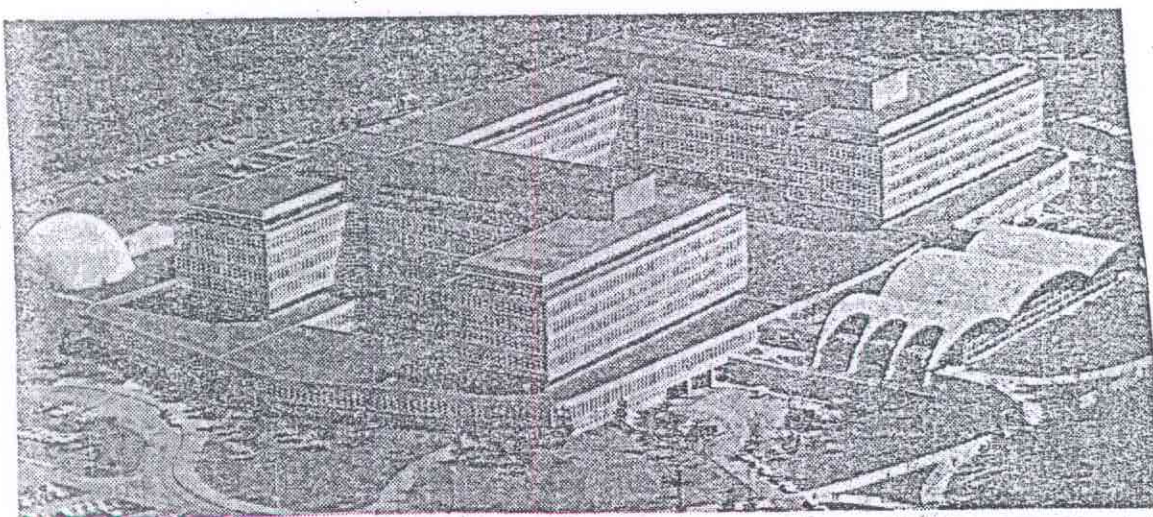
"He hasn't done anything criminal. We had no part in his private female companionship relations. We did not pay him to pay her. We paid him what he deserves on the grounds of what he is doing for us. I'm proud we have a country that will attract a man of his high caliber and reputation and promise inside the Soviet Union. I mean, it really shows that when he lived here for a few years . . . He had everything going for him in his country, he was the youngest



ambassador they ever had. He leaves everything behind in order to accept our way of life. We all ought to be proud."

However Turner is embarrassed over the case of an employee, William Kampiles, having been convicted of selling satellite secrets to Moscow. "I've tightened security procedures here. I'd like it not to have happened. It's very difficult to establish such tight procedures that it can't happen. All the papers on my desk are highly classified. It's the medium of doing business. If I have to sign for each one we can get ourselves tied in knots. So you have to compromise between efficiency and security. I think the whole government in the past 10 years has leaned a little bit much toward more efficient ways of handling their paper rather than to secure ways of handling them."

— Joy Billington



—United Press International

The CIA in all its awesomeness